



Abortion court battles press on, even in deep red states



In this Friday, June 24, 2022, file photo, abortion rights protesters cheer at a rally following the United States Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, federally protected right to abortion, outside the state capitol in Lansing, Mich.

Associated Press

By REBECCA BOONE and GEOFF MULVIHILL
Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — It's likely that virtually all abortions will be banned eventually in deeply conservative Idaho, along with most other Republican-dominated states, but there are still battles to play out in court

and maybe the legislature before it happens. Wednesday, lawyers representing a physician and the regional Planned Parenthood affiliate went before the Idaho Supreme Court to ask the justices to block enforcement of laws intended to restrict abortion. Since the top federal court's

June 24 ruling overturning the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, the abortion fight has continued to play out in courts, with judges deciding whether bans or other deep restrictions can be enforced. The landscape has been shifting nearly daily.

Continued on next page

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Continued from Front

On Tuesday, Kansas voters decisively defeated an amendment to the state constitution that would have allowed lawmakers to impose restrictions on abortion — or even a ban. The conservative state was the first in the nation to have a ballot question on abortion since *Roe v. Wade* was overturned.

Bans on abortion at any point in pregnancy are being enforced in eight states and as soon as fetal cardiac activity can be detected — generally around six weeks' gestation — in another five. And most or all clinics have stopped offering abortion services in a handful of additional states because of legal uncertainty.

Abortion rights groups, which have spent decades in courts trying to preserve access, are continuing the fight even in places such as Idaho, where they're unlikely to prevail in the long run. In several cases, judges have paused enforcement of bans, allowing at least some abortions to continue, at least for a time.

In Kentucky, where enforcement of a ban has stopped and started multiple times since June, enforcement was allowed to resume with a ruling Monday.

And in Louisiana, there were about 610 abortions per month in 2021. With the shifting status, 249 were reported from June 24 through July 29. While that's far fewer than normal in



Vice President Kamala Harris, right, speaks in the Indian Treaty Room on the White House complex in Washington, Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, on securing access to reproductive and other health during the first meeting of the interagency Task Force on Reproductive Healthcare Access. President Joe Biden attends virtually and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, left, and Attorney General Merrick Garland, center, attend in person.

Associated Press

that period, the legal fight did allow some patients access. Rachel Sussman, vice president of state policy and advocacy for Planned Parenthood, said that the goal is to remove all barriers to abortion access, but that partial victories can help women, too. "Whatever access we are able to maintain, we are going to fight for it," she said.

In the Idaho cases, Dr. Caitlin Gustafson and Planned Parenthood Great Northwest, Hawaii, Alaska, Indiana, Kentucky are suing the state over three laws. One that would take effect on Aug. 25 would effectively ban all abortions. Another allows potential relatives

of a fetus or embryo to sue medical providers who perform an abortion. A third law expected to take effect on Aug. 19 would ban abortions for pregnancies beyond six weeks of gestation and was not scheduled to be part of Wednesday's hearing.

It quickly became clear that the three laws are intertwined. Justice Robin Brody noted that the laws refer to one another and even have language to make clear which would take precedent if all three were in effect.

Though the six-week abortion ban both contain exceptions for procedures done to save the life of the

pregnant person or in cases of rape or incest, the exceptions set a very high bar that experts say will be difficult to meet. For instance, people using the rape or incest exception will have to report the crime to law enforcement and then show that report to the abortion provider — but it often takes weeks or months to obtain a copy of a newly filed police report under Idaho's public record laws. The total abortion ban would allow health care providers to be charged with a crime even if the abortion is the only way to save their patient's life — but the health care providers could then try to defend

themselves in court with evidence that the procedure was necessary because of an immediate medical emergency.

"That language gives no indication of how imminent, or substantial, the risk of death must be in order for a provider to feel confident" performing the abortion, said Alan Schoenfeld, the attorney representing the plaintiffs told the justices Wednesday. "Suppose a patient with pulmonary hypertension has a 30 to 50% risk of dying ... is that enough?"

The doctor and abortion rights group argue that the law allowing potential relatives of an embryo or fetus to sue abortion providers wrongly takes enforcement of a state law and puts it in the hands of individuals instead of state entities, a violation of the separation of government powers. The law allows the father, grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles of a "preborn child" to each sue an abortion provider for a minimum of \$20,000 in damages within four years after the abortion. Rapists can't file a lawsuit under the law, but relatives of rapists could.

In court Wednesday, Daniel Bower, a lawyer representing the Legislature, urged the state's justices to end a stay preventing enforcement of the laws.

"Because of that stay, preborn children are being killed in Idaho, contrary to duly enacted and wholly valid statutes," he said. □

Number of uninsured Americans drops to record low



Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra speaks during a news conference June 28, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

Washington (AP) — The number of people living in America without health insurance coverage hit an all-time low of 8 percent this year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced Tuesday.

"Every American has the right to the peace of mind that comes with access to affordable, quality health care," President Joe Biden said in a statement Tuesday about the record-low rate of uninsured Americans.

The findings come days af-

ter Democrats hammered out a 725-page climate, health care and tax deal that would extend generous federal subsidies for people who buy private health insurance that are credited with driving down the uninsured rates. Democrats have proposed spending \$64 billion to extend those price breaks for three more years.

The drop in uninsured Americans began last year, when Congress and Biden signed off on a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief bill

that lowered premiums and out-of-pocket costs for new or returning customers purchasing plans through the Affordable Care Act's private health insurance markets.

The uninsured rate fell to just under 9 percent last year with the improved subsidies. The Biden administration also began to step up advertising and increased the number of counselors who helped sign up people for plans during the open enrollment season last year. □





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Senate moves to decisive vote adding Sweden, Finland to NATO

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER and LISA MASCARO

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senators moved toward what was expected to be an overwhelming, bipartisan vote Wednesday approving NATO membership for Finland and Sweden, calling expansion of the Western defensive bloc a “slam-dunk” for U.S. national security and a day of reckoning for Russian President Vladimir Putin over his invasion of Ukraine.

Senators invited the ambassadors of the two Nordic nations to witness the debate and the vote, a crucial step in opening a new era for the now 30-member North Atlantic Treaty Organization and its 73-year-old pact of mutual defense among the United States and democratic allies in Europe.

President Joe Biden has sought quick entry for the two previously non-militarily aligned northern European nations. Their candidacies have won ratification from more than half of the NATO member nations in the roughly three months since the two applied, a purposely rapid pace meant to send a message to Russia over its six-month-old war against Ukraine’s West-looking government.

“It sends a warning shot to tyrants around the world who believe free democracies are just up for grabs,” Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., said in the Senate debate ahead of the vote. “Russia’s unprovoked invasion has changed the way we think about world secu-



Finland's Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto, left, Sweden's Foreign Minister Ann Linde, right, and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg attend a media conference after the signature of the NATO Accession Protocols for Finland and Sweden in the NATO headquarters in Brussels, July 5, 2022.

rity,” she added.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, who visited Kyiv earlier this year, urged unanimous approval, and the vote was expected to near that. Speaking to the Senate, McConnell cited Finland’s and Sweden’s well-funded, modernizing militaries and their experience working with U.S. forces and weapons systems, calling it a “slam-dunk for national security” of the United States. “Their accession will make NATO stronger and America more secure. If any senator is looking for a defensible excuse to vote no, I wish them good luck,” McConnell said.

Sen. Josh Hawley, a Missouri Republican who of-

ten aligns his positions with those of the most ardent supporters of former President Donald Trump, has been one of the few to speak in opposition. Hawley took the Senate floor to call European security alliances a distraction from what he called the United States’ chief rival China, not Russia.

“We can do more in Europe ... devote more resources, more firepower ... or do what we need to do to deter Asia and China. We cannot do both,” Hawley said, calling his a “classic nationalist approach” to foreign policy.

Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas, like Hawley a possible 2024 presidential contender, rebutted his points with-

out naming his potential Republican rival.

That included arguing against Hawley’s contention that a bigger NATO would mean more obligations for the U.S. military, the world’s largest. Cotton was one of many citing the two nations’ military strengths including Finland’s experience securing its hundreds of miles of border with Russia and its well-trained ground forces, and Sweden’s well-equipped navy and air force.

They’re “two of the strongest members of the alliance the minute they join,” Cotton said.

U.S. State and Defense department officials consider the two countries net “security providers,” strength-

ening NATO’s defense posture in the Baltics in particular. Finland is expected to exceed NATO’s 2% GDP defense spending target in 2022, and Sweden has committed to meet the 2% goal.

That’s in contrast to many of NATO’s newcomers formerly from the orbit of the Soviet Union, many with smaller militaries and economies. North Macedonia, NATO’s most recent newcomer nation, brought an active military of just 8,000 personnel when it joined in 2020.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said he and McConnell had committed to the country’s leaders that the Senate would approve the ratification resolution “as fast as we could” to bolster the alliance “in light of recent Russian aggression.”

A late-afternoon vote was expected after debate on the measure and amendments. One amendment from Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., would ensure that NATO’s guarantee to defend its members does not replace a formal role for Congress in authorizing the use of military force. Another from Sen. Dan Sullivan, R-Alaska, would declare that all NATO members should spend a minimum of 2% of their gross domestic product on defense and 20% of their defense budgets on major equipment, including research and development.

Sweden and Finland applied in May, setting aside their longstanding stance of military nonalignment. □

EPA: Chemical in medical-device cleanser poses cancer risk

By **MATTHEW DALY**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Environmental Protection Agency is warning residents who live near medical sterilizing plants in 13 states and Puerto Rico about potential health risks from emissions of ethylene oxide, a chemical widely used in their operations.

Laredo, Texas; Ardmore, Oklahoma; and Lakewood, Colorado, are among the communities facing the highest risk from ethylene oxide emissions, EPA said. The agency has notified 23 commercial sterilizers 19 in the continental U.S. and four in Puerto Rico that their operations pose an elevated risk of cancer and other ailments. The notice follows a recent survey of emissions data from almost 100 commercial sterilizers nationwide.

Ethylene oxide is used to clean everything from catheters to syringes, pacemakers and plastic surgical gowns.

While short-term or infrequent exposure to ethylene oxide does not appear to pose a health risk, EPA said long-term or lifetime exposure to the chemical could lead to a variety of health impacts, including lymphoma and breast cancer. EPA said it is working with



Environmental Protection Agency administrator Michael Regan speaks at a news conference May 5, 2022, at the Department of Justice in Washington.

Associated Press

commercial sterilizers to take appropriate steps to reduce emissions.

"Today, EPA is taking action to ensure communities are informed and engaged in our efforts to address ethylene oxide, a potent air toxic posing serious health risks with long-term exposure," EPA Administrator Michael Regan said in a statement Wednesday.

EPA will conduct public outreach campaigns in each of the communities where elevated risks have been

found, including an Aug. 10 webinar. More than half the sites on EPA's watch list are in predominantly minority or low-income communities.

Laredo, one of the communities targeted by the EPA notice, is a border city where the vast majority of residents are Latino and more than a quarter live in poverty. Missouri-based Midwest Sterilization Corp. operates a sterilization plant in Laredo. The company also owns a plant in

Jackson, Missouri that is on EPA's watch list.

More than 40% of Laredo's nearly 70,000 schoolchildren attend campuses in areas with an elevated risk of cancer due to ethylene oxide emissions from the Midwest plant, according to an analysis by ProPublica and the Texas Tribune. A spokesperson for Midwest declined immediate comment. But the company told ProPublica and the Tribune last December that cancer risk from its Laredo

plant is overstated. Emissions it reported to the EPA are "worst case scenarios," rather than specific pollution levels, the company said.

The Ethylene Oxide Sterilization Association, an industry group, said in a statement that ethylene oxide has been used for decades by the health care community to sterilize a wide variety of medical devices and equipment. More than 20 billion health care products are sterilized each year in the U.S. alone.

In many cases, there are no practical alternatives currently available to ethylene oxide, the group said, adding that use of less effective cleaning methods "could introduce the real risks of increased morbidity and mortality" at hospitals throughout the country.

EPA called medical sterilization "a critical function that ensures a safe supply of medical devices for patients and hospitals."

The agency said it is committed to addressing pollution concerns associated with EO, sometimes called EtO, "in a comprehensive way that ensures facilities can operate safely in communities while also providing sterilized medical supplies." □



In this photo provided by the Nebraska Forest Service, the Carter Canyon wildfire burns in western Nebraska on Monday, Aug. 1, 2022 in Neb.

Associated Press

GERING, Neb. (AP) — Fire crews made substantial headway in containing a western Nebraska wildfire that has destroyed some homes, despite getting significantly less rain than officials hoped for.

Officials believed the Carter Canyon Fire south of Gering was about 85%

contained by Wednesday morning after being only about 30% contained a day earlier, Ben Bohall with the Nebraska Forest Service said.

Fire crews had hoped storms Tuesday would bring heavy rains to help douse the flames, but Bohall said the area instead only saw

Most of Nebraska wildfire contained, despite lack of rain

light showers and lightning strikes that sparked two additional fires.

The first fire was sparked inside the wildfire parameters and was extinguished after burning a little more than 3 acres (12,140 square meters), Bohall said. The second fire erupted in Banner County south of the wildfire and was put out after burning about 5 acres (20,234 square meters), he said.

A jump in humidity has helped keep the wildfire from gaining energy, Bohall said. There also was a slight chance of thunderstorms and showers Wednesday night, but crews weren't expecting much in they way of help from Mother

Nature, he said.

"Still, we're hoping that by tomorrow, we'll end up turning this effort back over to the Gering Fire Department," Bohall said.

The wildfire has scorched about 25 square miles (65 square kilometers) of mostly grass and timberland, destroying three homes and damaging several others over the weekend. Officials confirmed late Tuesday that the fire was started by several lightning strikes Saturday evening. It gained ground early on due to tinder-dry conditions, rough terrain and high winds.

The National Weather Service has forecast scorching temperatures over 100 de-

grees (37.7 Celsius) each day through Friday, with the heat receding somewhat to the upper 80s on Saturday.

Other large fires are raging in the West, including a Northern California fire that has burned roughly 90 square miles (233 square kilometers) in the Klamath National Forest. In northwestern Montana, a fire that started Friday on the Flathead Indian Reservation had 25 square miles (66 square kilometers) by Tuesday, and the Moose Fire in Idaho had burned more than 85 square miles (220 square kilometers) in the Salmon-Challis National Forest. □

U.S. seeks possession of Venezuelan 747 grounded in Argentina

By DANIEL POLITI and ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — The U.S. Justice Department said Tuesday it is seeking possession of a Venezuelan cargo jet that has been grounded in Argentina since early June because it was previously owned by an Iranian airline that allegedly has ties to terror groups.

The request to Argentina was revealed a day after an Argentine judge allowed 12 of the 19 crewmembers of the plane to leave the country as authorities continue to investigate possible terror ties of those traveling in the Boeing 747. Federal Judge Federico Villena said late Monday that the remaining four Iranians and three Venezuelans must stay.

The U.S. request sent to Argentina on Tuesday followed the unsealing of a warrant in federal court in the District of Columbia that was issued last month and that argues the U.S.-made plane should be forfeited because of violations of U.S. export control laws.

The plane, according to the Justice Department, was transferred from Iranian airline Mahan Air which officials have alleged provides support for Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force to Emtrasur, a subsidiary of Venezuela's state-owned Consorcio Venezolano de Industrias Aeronáuticas y Servicios Aéreos, or CONVIASA. CONVIASA is under U.S. sanctions.

By transferring the airplane to the Venezuelan firm in October without prior U.S. government authorization, Mahan Air violated a 2008 order issued by the Department of Commerce that has since been periodically renewed, the U.S. says. The Justice Department says Emtrasur subsequently re-exported the plane between Caracas, Tehran and Moscow also without U.S. government approval. "The Department of Justice



A Venezuelan-owned Boeing 747, operated by Venezuela's state-owned Emtrasur cargo line, taxis on the runway after landing in the Ambrosio Taravella airport in Cordoba, Argentina, June 6, 2022.

Associated Press

will not tolerate transactions that violate our sanctions and export laws," Matthew Olsen, the head of the Justice Department's national security division, said in a statement. "Working with our partners across the globe, we will give no quarter to governments and state-sponsored entities looking to evade our sanctions and export control regimes in service of their malign activities." The moves marked the latest development in the saga of the mysterious plane, which landed June 6 at Ezeiza International Airport outside Buenos Aires and was grounded two days later.

The case has raised attention in several South American countries as well as the United States and Israel amid allegations that the plane was a cover for Iranian intelligence operations in the region. Iran and Venezuela vehemently deny those claims.

The issue has caught the attention of members of U.S. Congress. On July 26, a dozen U.S. Republican senators wrote a letter to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland accusing the Justice Department of failing to assist Argentine authorities in its investigation of the Venezuelan plane.

Rep. Darrell Issa, a California Republican, pressed Olsen about it at a hearing last week and lamented that in his view Iran was not receiving the scrutiny it deserved. Olsen said he was aware of the case but added: "This is an ongoing matter. I can't talk about the specifics."

The U.S. Commerce Department took its own action Tuesday, announcing it had suspended for 180 days the export privileges of Emtrasur.

The Israeli government has praised Argentina for grounding the plane and contends at least some the Iranian crew members "were involved directly in the trafficking of weapons to Syria and the terrorist organization Hezbollah of Lebanon."

Among those who will continue to be prohibited from leaving Argentina is the Iranian pilot of the plane, Gholamreza Ghasemi.

Ghasemi is a former commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guard and is a shareholder and board member of Iran's Qeshm Fars Air, which the U.S. Treasury Department has said is controlled by Mahan Air and provides material support to the Quds Force.

The other crew members

required to remain in Argentina are Abdolbaset Mohammadim, Mohammad Khosraviaragh and Saeid Vali Zadeh of Iran and Mario Arraga, Víctor Pérez Gómez and José García Contreras of Venezuela.

"What is being investigated is whether, under the appearance of legal activity, they are financing terrorism operations (specifically with Hezbollah) or whether they are part of a plan that has ties with" Hezbollah, the judge wrote.

Villena emphasized that connections with Iran's Revolutionary Guard are not under investigation because Argentina does not consider it to be a terrorist organization.

Mahan Air has denied any ties to the aircraft and Venezuela has demanded that Argentine authorities release the plane.

Yet Argentine authorities who searched the plane found a Mahan Air flight log documenting the aircraft's flights after the transfer to Emtrasur, including a flight to Tehran in April, the Justice Department said.

The plane was carrying cargo for several Argentine auto parts companies that it loaded in Mexico before stopping in Caracas and arriving in Argentina. □

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Groups ask U.N. to investigate Beirut's massive 2020 blast

By **BASSEM MROUE**
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanese and international organizations Wednesday called on the U.N. Human Rights Council to send a fact-finding mission to investigate the Beirut port blast two years ago, as a domestic probe continues to stall. The call by groups including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International came as the Lebanese investigation has been stalled since December following legal challenges by charged and accused officials against the judge leading the investigation. The Aug. 4, 2020 blast killed nearly 220 people, injured over 6,000 and caused widespread damage in Beirut.

The call also came amid concerns that a large section of the port's giant grain silos, shredded by the massive explosion, might collapse days after a smaller part fell following a week-long fire of fermented grain ignited by the scorching summer heat. Lebanese authorities closed a main road outside the port and directed traffic into internal streets as a precautionary measure.

The northern block of the silos has been slowly tilting for days since the other



A rescue team surveys the site of a massive explosion in the port of Beirut, Lebanon, Aug. 7, 2020. **Associated Press**

part collapsed Sunday. A group of U.N. experts also called Wednesday for an international investigation saying "this tragedy marked one of the largest non-nuclear blasts in recent memory, yet the world has done nothing to find out why it happened." The organizations called on the U.N. rights council to put forward a resolution at the upcoming council session in September that would dispatch "without delay, an independent

and impartial fact-finding mission" for the explosion. They believe the mission would establish the facts surrounding the explosion, including the root causes, without political intervention. This would support the victims' campaign for an effective investigation, they said. The groups want to establish state and individual responsibility and support justice for the victims. Many have blamed the Lebanese government's longtime corruption and

mismanagement for the tragedy considered one of the largest non-nuclear explosions in history when hundreds of tons of highly explosive ammonium nitrate, a material used in fertilizers, detonated at the port. Official correspondence between political, security and judicial officials reveal that many were aware about the hazardous substances unloaded in the port a decade ago without taking meaningful action to remove it.

After the blast, port, customs and legal documents revealed that the ammonium nitrate had been shipped to Lebanon in 2013 on a worn out Russian ship and stored improperly at a port warehouse ever since. Tarek Bitar, the judge leading the Lebanese investigation, charged four former senior government officials with intentional killing and negligence that led to the deaths of dozens of people. He also charged several top security officials in the case.

None of them have been detained and two of those charged were re-elected to parliament in May. An initial investigation by Human Rights Watch points to the potential involvement of foreign-owned companies, as well as senior political and security officials in Lebanon.

"It is now, more than ever, clear that the domestic investigation cannot deliver justice," the groups said adding that the establishment of an international fact finding mission mandated by the U.N. Human Rights Council is "all the more urgent."

The group said that previous calls by survivors of the explosion and families of the victims remain unanswered. □



In this photo released by the Iranian Foreign Ministry, Enrique Mora, a leading European Union diplomat, left, shakes hands with Iran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani in Tehran, Iran, March 27, 2022.

Associated Press

By **NASSER KARIMI**
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran, the United States and the European Union said Wednesday they would send senior representa-

tives to Vienna amid what appears to be a last-ditch effort at reviving talks over Tehran's tattered 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. It wasn't immediately clear if all other parties

Iran, U.S., EU to send envoys to Vienna for nuclear talks

to the landmark accord would attend the surprise summit, nor if there had been any progress after a monthslong stalemate and recent fruitless round of indirect talks between Iran and the U.S. in Doha.

The European Union official who chairs the talks, Enrique Mora, said the negotiations would focus on the most recent draft to restore the agreement, while Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, Ali Bagheri Kani, said he was heading to the Austrian capital "to advance the negotiations."

U.S. Special Representative for Iran Rob Malley wrote on Twitter that he was pre-

paring to travel to Vienna for talks. He cautioned that American "expectations are in check" ahead of the negotiations. "The United States welcomes EU efforts and is prepared for a good faith attempt to reach a deal. It will shortly be clear if Iran is prepared for the same," Malley added.

The German Foreign Ministry said Berlin would be represented at an "expert level" at the talks in Vienna, adding it supported efforts to fully revive the deal "even if hopes are very small." It again pushed Iran to conclude the deal and said that would mean "giving up maximalist posi-

tions in areas beyond" the nuclear agreement.

Russia's chief representative at the talks, Mikhail Ulyanov, also wrote on Twitter that negotiators from Russia, a key signatory of the nuclear deal, "stand ready for constructive talks in order to finalize the agreement." The prospects for the deal's restoration have darkened in the past few months with major sticking points remaining, including Tehran's demand that Washington provide guarantees that it won't again quit the pact and that it lift terrorism sanctions on Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. □

After 34 years of existence Education for Employment will soon become an official department of the Government

ORANJESTAD – Recently the Government of Aruba appointed a ‘quartermaster’ for Education for Employment (EPE), Mrs. Sabine de Groot.

EPE started as a project back in 1988 with the closing of the Lago refinery. Many people were left unemployed, and for this reason a retraining program was started so that the local population could find a new job, different from what they were used to.

Today, many decades later, EPE is tasked with the same purpose.

In past decades, EPE remained instrumental in the training and retraining of the local population, offering quality courses at a so-

cial price. Minister of Labor, Glenbert Croes will carry on this starting point, but with a new twist.

The Covid pandemic changed the world stage eliminating a lot of jobs. Besides, worldwide many existing jobs are seeing change, and for this, retraining is vital. At the same time, worldwide the need for workers is enormous. And this is where EPE and the Department of Labor Progress, DPL, are instrumental.

EPE will see an upgrade and update of its available courses to meet the demand of our labor market. Soon the department will announce a national registration for job seekers to register at DPL, the depart-

ment tasked with putting people back to work.

According to the minister, Aruba needs each and everyone. For this reason, an upgrade of the courses at EPE and a national registration at DPL for job seekers is necessary.

“The effects of the pandemic affected everyone in a way that could not have been predicted. But now it's time to reflect and take the reins of our lives back into our own hands. There is a great opportunity for work out there. It's time that together we get to work to better our personal and professional progress.”

The quartermaster together with the Department of Human Resources will give



EPE, which has demonstrated its right to exist, an official formalization in the Government apparatus.

Minister of Education and Sport received a presentation regarding Leadership Movement

ORANJESTAD – Recently, minister of Education and Sport, Endy Croes held a meeting with Mr. Herrick Henriquez, director of Aruba Trade & Industry Association (ATIA). During this meeting, the minister received a thorough presentation of

ATIA's leadership project, 'Lidera'.

During the meeting they also discussed various topics of interest.

ATIA has declared 2022 as a year of purpose. This year, ATIA's annual

conference has the title 'Purpose as Power'. What can be expected is a conference with music, impact content, and a lot of motivation. The speakers at this conference are two people recognized around the world, namely, Mrs. Melis Senova who will elaborate on how to design your business with your employees as the main element. Mr. Trent Shelton, an ex-NFL player who today is one of the best speakers in the world, as well as author of the books 'The Greatest You' and 'Straight Up', will focus on how your purpose is also your power.

During the conference there will be a special event for student athletes, presented by Mr. Shelton. During this event he will connect with the youth of Aruba as an athlete, and will provide them with words of inspiration and motivation.

Minister Endy Croes said that this is a beautiful initiative by ATIA, one that counts with the support of the ministry of Education and Sport.

To finalize, the minister wished ATIA a lot of success with the project.



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Sometimes combining the best of the best is a matter of all things falling into place. Every Wednesday from 7pm to 10pm you are welcomed to enter a world where food is a passion. Papillon Restaurant presents their guest chef Patrick van der Donk - and with The Chef's Garden menu being a fresh concept on the island, we're sure you will fall completely in love with this.

A bit about guest chef Patrick

Chef Patrick van der Donk is a true legend on Aruba. Chef Patrick attended culinary school in the Netherlands where he worked with several of the best Dutch chefs, including two 3-star Michelin chefs who taught him all the tricks of the trade. He was also inspired by self-taught Mi-

chelin star chef Raymond Blanc OBE who has educated the most prominent British chefs of today.

The menu is carefully done with local products, fresh and perfectly matched with a selection of wines by local sommeliers. Vegan options are available;

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Re-Tech, an impactful grassroots initiative and collaboration

Oranjestad - "Re-Tech" started in 2019 when FUTURA (Aruba Futura Foundation) launched its initiative to recycle discarded computers, hardware, materials, and devices.

Most people buy new devices like computers, tablets, or smartphones and discard them when they get old or not used anymore. The same applies to companies, organizations, and departments that replace older devices when the older models still function. If discarded devices are not re-distributed or recycle, they will end up in the trash and ultimately in the dump.

In 2019 FUTURA started collecting computers, hardware, and other materials and technological parts from offices and re-distribute these to different schools and school boards that need these. In 2021, FUTURA collaborated with EPI Students as part of a leadership class. EPI students had to design the initiative and create a name, logo, slogan, and strategy to collect as many devices as possible. That is how they came up with the name "Re-Tech" and its slogan 'Giving technology a second chance'.

From 2019 until July 2022, FUTURA and other partners collected 815 devices consisting of computers, monitors, keyboards, mice, phones, printers, beamers, cables, and other technological accessories. Organizations and Government Departments, private companies, and the community helped with donating these devices that

were no longer in use.

In the past, FUTURA, the Metabolic Foundation, and SKOA re-distributed computers, hardware, and other material to schools. In June 2022, Futura collaborated with the EPB Foundation to re-distribute 105 devices consisting of computers, towers, monitors, keyboards, mice, telephones, and more. EPB will reuse these devices in its new curriculum of ICT Support.

FUTURA is grateful to the Government of Aruba for its support and all their partners in the private, d public, and academic sectors for making 'Re-tech' a reality. A special thanks to the EPB Foundation and the community for their support.

Re-Tech is a grassroots initiative, an example of how you can achieve great things and mitigate the impact on the environment through collaboration.

If your organization has devices no longer in use but still functioning like computers etc, contact Futura at hello@futuraalab.org



to find out how to collaborate with the re-distribution of these unused devices to educational institutions and students who can use these. □



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For Directions

Aruba has no cases of Monkeypox

Oranjestad - Last week on the 28th of July, Aruba's public health agency known as Directie Volksgezondheid or DVG Aruba, informed the community and it's visitors of a possible Monkeypox case that was under investigation.

After many tests made and sent to The Netherlands for verification, yesterday DVG informed in the updated for this case that the results received were confirmed

to be negative.

Based on these results, it is verified and confirmed that Aruba does not have any Monkeypox cases registered as of yet. □



Visit Aruba's famous Anchor

At the south east coast of the island, standing alone on a windswept and barren land stands a popular Aruba landmark – a large anchor. It overlooks the sea just beyond, watching over the shipping lanes. It stands there in memory and in honor of all seamen who have lost their life at sea.

Where to Find the Anchor?

The anchor is a "must see" landmark when you visit Aruba. It is among the most photographed historical landmarks for the island. You want to make sure you add this stop on your itinerary when your visiting the south coast of Aruba. The bright red anchor against the backdrop of the deep blue Caribbean sea and the azure blue skies, make a great backdrop for your vacation pictures.

The anchor is located at the entrance to Gate 6 to the former Lago Colony. It is on the outskirts of Seroe Colorado, on the south east point of the island at the "T" junction to Baby Beach.

Depending on where you are staying on the island, follow the signs that indicate the way to Baby Beach. Once you reach the T-junction, it will be right in front of you.

About the Anchor

It will be hard to miss the anchor, it's huge! The anchor that weighs 21,772 kilos, is approximately 10 feet 6 inches wide and 15 feet, 6 inches tall. On the anchor there are some numbers. The 4112 and 4115, which are believed to be the serial numbers that refer to the "fluke" or horizontal and vertical parts of the anchor, respectively. The number 21772K refers to the weight of the anchor in kilos.

This type of anchor was manufactured by Hoesch Dortmund Horde, at a foundry located in Germany.

Where did the Anchor Come From?

There are a number of stories as to the origins of the anchor, which one do you think it was? (Unfortunately the mystery has never been solved, so your imagination can pick which one you think it might be!)

Story 1:

"According to Mr. Manuel M. Curiel, an ex-Lago Tug Captain, a fully laden VLCC (Very Large Crude Carrier) was seeking a mooring at the 15-mile anchorage, known as Bara, on the southern part of the island. This is the usual shallow mooring location for ships awaiting orders, etc.



The weather was rough with strong current. The normal procedure is that they would walk out three shackles (about 90 feet) until the anchor touches the bottom while the chain must rest on the bottom. Subsequently, they will walk out some extra shackles and when the ship starts to swing or lean on one side, the anchor is properly set. Because of the rough weather, unfortunately they did not get the time to walk out the extra tackles and because of the tension exerted on the winch, it broke, and they lost the anchor and its chain."

Story 2:

"Mr. Curiel also said that at one time a small tanker with a Korean crew, while lifting their anchor also lifted another anchor near the inner harbor. When the ship asked for assistance, he went with his tugboat along with a barge, to help. But eventually they had to cut the chain and let the anchor go to the bottom because they could not untangle them."

How Did The Anchor Become a Landmark?

Sometime between 1980 and 1985, three gentlemen (Mr. Wim Martinus – the Harbormaster of Aruba; Mr. August Genser – the ex-Division Superintendent of Lago's Laboratory; and Mr. Willie Davis – Owner of Filtec at Zeewijk in San Nicolas), were having a conversation with Mr. Charlie Brouns Jr. at his famous Charlie's Bar and Restaurant in San Nicolas. Charlie, who was a visionary and had dreams for developing the San Nicolas area, told these gentlemen that he would like to come up with something innovative for the San Nicolas area to draw tourism to the area.

The "anchor", which at that time was being stored at the Oranjestad harbor, was suggested as an option. Charlie liked the idea! He then contacted the President of Lago for permission to acquire the anchor. He was granted permission and the anchor was then relocated to its present location and dedicated "To All Seamen" on the occasion of the closing of the Lago Oil Refinery on March 31, 1985.

Through the Years

Through the years the Anchor was slowly weathering from the wind and salt. As time passed, sadly the origin and purpose of the anchor slowly faded away from people's memories.

After ChraliesBrouns Jr died on September 15, 2004, his friend Mr. Sam Speziale, requested assistance from the management of Valero Aruba Refinery to help maintain the monument. The Valero Aruba Refinery, graciously sandblasted and painted the anchor and poured a concrete pad around it. On April 17, 2005, the anchor monument was re-dedicated "To All Seamen" in a formal ceremony in memory of CharlesBrouns Jr.

Today, the anchor stands both as memorial to all seaman who have lost their lives at sea, but also as a silent reminder that Seroe Colorado is part of San Nicolas and that San Nicolas is still a vibrant and important part of the island of Aruba.

The Best Time to Visit

When your planning your visit to the south end of the island, you will want to include in your itinerary the many things to see and do there. The anchor will be just one of these stops, (I will recommend other places below). With that being said, I have to say, if you enjoy catching a sunrise, the anchor is one of the best places on the island to catch the sunrise. But in reality, anytime is a good time to visit, depending on your personal schedule. □

Checkpoint Color Aruba celebrated 50th anniversary with opening of exhibition “50 Years of Perpetual Light”

ORANJESTAD – On Tuesday, the official opening of the exhibition “50 Years of Perpetual Light”, honoring 50 years of existence of Checkpoint Color Aruba and its founder Mr. Rob Vermeer, took place at Checkpoint Color.

Natusha Croes, producer for this project, explains that the initiative started two years ago, and as one of Vermeer's youngest subjects, a conversation and collaboration was started where Vermeer showed Croes his photographs. “Right away I felt in my heart that it was due time for an exhibition”, Croes said. And so the process began to digitalize all the negatives that Vermeer had stored. Croes says that boxes full of negatives were brought down for the attic in order to digitalize, scan, retouch and form a big collection consisting of more than a thousand photographs. Two hundred images can be appreciated in this exhibition, selected by Rob Vermeers son and current director of Checkpoint Color, Fernando Vermeer, who is in charge of the in-

stallation and exhibition.

As a producer, Croes says that she made sure to approach organizations like UNOCA – cultural fund that cofinances Art & Cultural Projects in Aruba – that helped with the printing of photographs, and Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds that supported 11 documentaries and interviews with various models who worked with Rob Vermeer from 1972 until today.

“What people can admire today is a big collection of photographs showing the modern age of Aruba. Starting in 1972 until 2022, you can see various important characters in our history, like Betico Croes, Vale Croes, Felis Ras among other icons and bulwarks of the island, and you can see how Aruba developed during these past 50 years. It is a historical moment, a moment to applaud and we must be very grateful to be part of this moment”, Croes said.

Mr. Rob Vermeer says that he established his business 50 years ago when

he came back from the Netherlands and like many other photographers these days, began photographing weddings, families, children, etc. But he realized that a lot of people wanted color pictures, and because there wasn't a color lab here in Aruba, they had to send everything to Curaçao or the Netherlands, and that took weeks before they could get the photographs back. So he made the decision that a color lab was necessary for Aruba, but he didn't have the funds to buy the necessary equipment. He says that it was with the help of various organization and people that he was able to reach 100,000 florins, which back then was a lot of money, and bought all the equipment.

“I opened my business on the 3rd of August 1972, and the first client who walked in was one of the Eman brothers, who put 10 rolls of photographs in front of me to develop. That was a good sign, and from then I started developing photographs and everything went smoothly. Eventually



we opened seven different stores around Aruba in the hotel area, San Nicolas, Cura Cabay, Oranjestad, and we grew a lot”, Vermeer remembers.

But with the digital era, cellular phones made an entrance and their business diminished, and slowly they had to close their stores, one by one. “This hurt me a lot, not for the stores but for the workers, because all the years we were working and we grew until we reached 40 years, they were family. A lot of the personnel were in our service for ten, twenty years, and it was very painful. But for us to survive, it was necessary”, he said.

All the stores closed, and Checkpoint Color went in Columbusstraat and they started with fewer employees, until Fernando took his family business over. “Fernando made Check-

point to his idea, and still on the basis of photography, but in the front of the business he made a style of museum. Checkpoint is still used to develop and take pictures. Thanks to Fernando with his creativity we could live on in the future”, Vermeer added.

During the opening, various ministers were present including the minister of Culture, Xiomara Maduro, who took the opportunity to congratulate Checkpoint Color for its 50th anniversary and Mr. Vermeer for his birthday. At the same time, she delivered a commemorative gift to Mr. Vermeer for his 50 years of work.

“Obviously we don't want to let such a special moment pass by without bring a piece of our heart, because what Rob did for 50 years, is capture and collect memories of our country”, she said. □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 44 Painter's wear
 - 1 Herring's kin
 - 5 "Skyfall" singer
 - 10 Lukewarm
 - 12 Styling site
 - 13 Cartoon genre
 - 14 Sluggish
 - 15 Road-house
 - 16 React to a punch
 - 18 "Macbeth" prop
 - 20 Stout relative
 - 21 Rocker Clapton
 - 23 Maiden name label
 - 24 Pound hound
 - 26 Against
 - 28 Pool unit
 - 29 Rational
 - 31 Antique
 - 32 Graffiti artist
 - 36 Cockiness
 - 39 Quarter-back Manning
 - 40 Home run, in slang
 - 41 "Hamlet" extras
 - 43 Peace goddess

DOWN

- 1 Solemn
- 2 Reddish dye
- 3 Doing impressions
- 4 Badly lit
- 5 Gobi setting
- 6 "Phooey!"
- 7 Posh
- 8 Rhine temptress
- 9 Main dish
- 11 Barren areas
- 17 Numerical prefix
- 19 Obtain
- 22 Baseless stories
- 24 Danger-ous apps
- 25 Break-ing news reports
- 27 Not pos.
- 28 Went ballistic
- 30 Chowd down
- 33 Colum-bus's home
- 34 Put in office
- 35 Hazards
- 37 Nice guy
- 38 Dreary shade
- 42 Band blaster

A	B	A	S	E	D	T	W	O	S
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C	R	E	A	S	E	M	I	L	D
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G	A	W	K			S	T	E	E
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E	E	L	S		T	I	T	L	E

Yesterday's answer

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13						14			
15				16	17				
18			19					20	
			21			22		23	
	24	25				26	27		
28				29	30				
31					32			33	34
35									
36			37	38				39	
40						41	42		
43						44			
45								46	

8-4

A X Y D L B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-4

CRYPTOQUOTE

H S D F X ' C O V P Y R H A T L F V A
J W O C H T W J K P J W P A L D F X ' C O
V H Y Y H A T J F R O O K V P Y R H A T ,
O E O A J X P Y Y D D F X ' Y Y Z P R O
K C F T C O U U . — N P C P I R F N P Z P

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: A FRIEND IS ONE WHO KNOWS YOU AND LOVES YOU JUST THE SAME. — ELBERT HUBBARD

How to save on school supplies by tapping your community



Back to school and office supplies are on sale at a Target store, Wednesday, July 27, 2022, in North Miami, Fla.

Associated Press

By LAURA MCMULLEN of NerdWallet

It's that time again: back to school, back to spending so much money on supplies. And this year, families will have to shell out even more than usual because of inflation.

Thankfully, you can still save money on supplies and other gear by leaning on local parents, neighbors and community members. Here's how.

BUY IN BULK, THEN SPLIT THE COSTS

You know who else is buying the same supplies you need? The parents of your kid's classmates. So join forces.

Buy certain supplies in bulk if the cost per unit is less than that of a smaller pack. Then split those supplies among other caregivers, so each person pays less than if they had gone solo.

Buying in bulk is a smart strategy for more general items typically found on classroom lists.

These could include facial tissues, disinfecting wipes, plastic storage bags, paper towels and sanitizers, says Charles Field, CEO of TeacherLists, a digital platform that enables teachers to upload supply lists, which retailers and parents can access.

Say your kid is supposed to bring hand sanitizer. One 12-ounce bottle could cost \$16. But buy a four-pack for \$36, and four people could each spend \$9 per bottle. Also try this method for

harder-to-get and more expensive items, says Maggie Klockenga, a Morton, Illinois-based certified financial planner and owner of Make a Money Mindshift, through which she coaches clients on their cash flow. Say that fine-tipped dry-erase markers are tough to find.

Rather than multiple parents searching empty shelves and paying a premium collaborate.

Klockenga, a parent of three school-age kids, has tips for coordinating to save on supplies. "It does require some behind-the-scenes organizing," she says.

First, keep the number of people involved to under 10, she suggests, "before it gets a little hairy." Gauge interest before proceeding. Next, compare prices on those items you want to split.

Amazon is a safe bet for everyday essentials, she says, but office supply stores can be promising for large orders of classroom-specific items.

Finally, tell parents how much the cost will be per person and request that payment. Buy the products only after everyone has paid. After purchasing the items, arrange a pickup.

REACH OUT TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Don't want to coordinate that kind of effort? Klockenga suggests tapping existing groups.

Call your public library, local community center or

place of worship to ask if they're leading a back-to-school supply drive. If not, consider making the case for one.

For example, if there are several school-age kids who attend your place of worship, ask leaders to organize a fundraiser for school supplies.

"See if they can help be a partner, so to speak, in both the administration of it and in getting some money," Klockenga says.

Make sure to mention how inflation has driven up these costs for many of the group's participants, she adds.

GET SECONDHAND GEAR FROM LOCAL MARKETS

Using pre-owned supplies and clothes is both eco-friendly and usually cheaper than buying new. The secondhand route is best for reusable items, such as clothes, backpacks and lunch boxes, says Kari Lorz, a Salem, Oregon-based certified financial education instructor and founder of Money for the Mamas, a website devoted to helping mothers learn about money.

However, Field points out that buying used is riskier for supplies that can wear down without you knowing, like ink pens.

As for where to find used stuff, Lorz recommends the Buy Nothing Project. According to its website, this movement includes thousands of local communities hosted on Facebook and the BuyNothing app. In these groups, members request and give away stuff for free.

Lorz frequents her local Buy Nothing group. She says it would be fine for a new member who hadn't previously given away anything to make requests. "There's nobody keeping tally," she says.

You may also find free or discounted items in other local, online spaces, such as Facebook Marketplace, Nextdoor and Craigslist.

For in-person shopping, seek out yard sales, garage sales and thrift stores. □

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Assistant Director

Xiomara Arends

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks

Sales

Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Columnists

Anthony Croes

Weststraat 22

T: 582-7800

E: news@arubatoday.com

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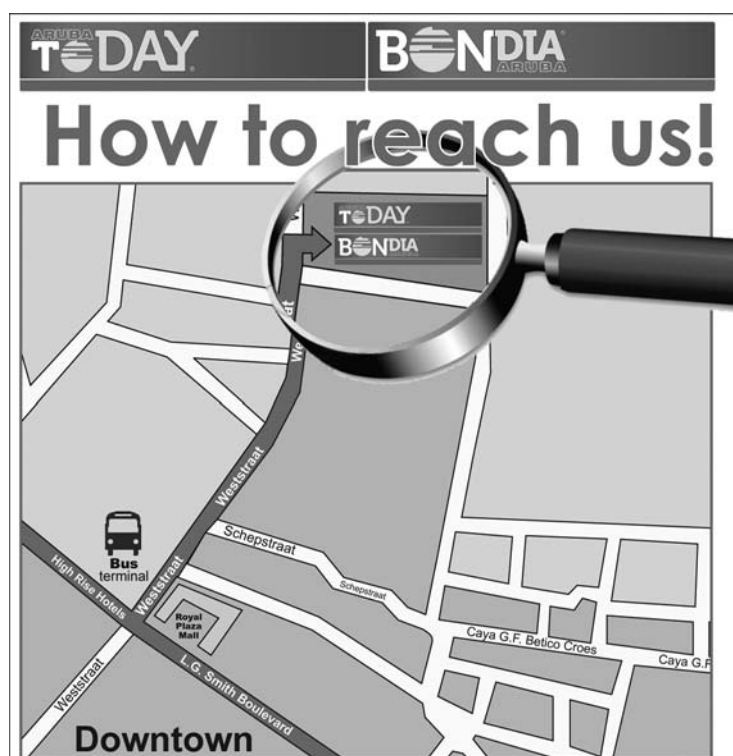
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STOP
Violence Against Women



Warner Bros. axes 'Batgirl,' won't release \$90M HBO Max film

By JAKE COYLE

NEW YORK (AP) — Warner Bros. has axed the \$90 million "Batgirl" film planned for HBO Max, according to a person connected with the film who was not authorized to speak publicly about it.

The decision was highly unusual for such a high-priced and nearly finished movie. But the studio ultimately decided "Batgirl" didn't merit either a streaming debut or a theatrical release, and has instead opted to entirely write off the film starring "In the Heights" star Leslie Grace as Batgirl and co-starring Michael Keaton (returning as Batman), J.K. Simmons and Brendan Fraser. It was directed by Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah. Production wrapped in April.

Warner Bros.' decision, one without any obvious parallel in Hollywood history, sent shockwaves through the industry. When a big-budget movie doesn't meet a studio's expectations, it's typically sold off or dumped quietly with little fanfare. "Batgirl," greenlit before WarnerMedia's merger with Discovery Inc., will instead simply not see the light of day after reportedly poor test screenings.

"We are saddened and



Leslie Grace arrives at a screening of "In the Heights" during the Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival on June 4, 2021.

Associated Press

shocked by the news. We still can't believe it," El Arbi and Fallah said in a statement Wednesday. "As directors, it is critical that our work be shown to audiences, and while the film was far from finished, we wish that fans all over the world would have had the opportunity to see and embrace the final film themselves. Maybe one day they will insha'Allah (if God wills)."

The directors signed their statement, posted on Insta-

gram, "Batgirl For Life." Under new Warner Bros. Discovery chief executive David Zaslav, Warner Bros. is shifting its strategy on film releases and trimming costs. Under previous chief executive Jason Kilar and partly as a pandemic response, the studio implemented day-and-date releases in 2021, opening films simultaneously in theaters and on HBO Max. Other films, like "Batgirl," were produced solely for

HBO Max.

This year, Warner Bros. has returned to exclusive theatrical windows for at least 45 days before sending movies to HBO Max. While "Batgirl" isn't as pricey as many superhero films, which typically cost \$150-200 million to make, it's a bigger budget movie for an HBO Max title. Zaslav has maintained larger budgeted movies are best served by a theatrical rollout. But marketing a movie like "Batgirl" for that

kind of release would require tens of millions more. Warner Bros. Discovery is set to report second-quarter earnings Thursday.

Representatives for Warner Bros. and Warner Bros. Discovery declined to comment. The "Batgirl" plans were first reported by the New York Post.

Warner Bros. also shelved "Scoob!: Holiday Haunt," an almost-completed sequel to 2020's "Scoob!" Producer and writer Tony Cervone confirmed in an Instagram post Tuesday that the "Scoob!" film was canned.

"Yes I am afraid this is true," wrote Cervone.

"The movie is practically finished and turned out beautifully. I am beyond heartbroken."

The "Batgirl" cancellation comes as Warner Bros. is trying to revamp its DC Films operations. While "The Batman" earlier this year performed well with \$770.8 million in ticket sales, Warner's DC releases have been erratic and plagued by controversy. "The Flash," scheduled for release next June, stars Ezra Miller who has been arrested twice this year in Hawaii, in a disorderly conduct case and on suspicion of assault. □

Videos in English depict last 6 months of Anne Frank's life



Journalists take images of the renovated Anne Frank House Museum in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Wednesday, Nov. 21, 2018.

Associated Press

AMSTERDAM (AP) — The Anne Frank House museum is releasing an English-language version of three videos in which an actress playing the young Jewish diarist describes the last six

months of her life, from her arrest to her death in a Nazi concentration camp.

The English version of "Anne Frank - After the Arrest" is set for release on Thursday, 78 years to the day since

Anne, her parents, her sister and four other Jews who hid with them in a secret annex of an Amsterdam house were arrested. Two non-Jewish helpers also were arrested.

The Frank family members hid in the annex from July 1942 until they were arrested in August 1944 and deported to concentration camps. Only Anne's father, Otto Frank, survived.

After the war, Otto had his dead teenage daughter's diary published, and it has since been translated into more than 70 languages. The building housing the secret annex was turned into a museum in 1960.

The videos being released Thursday were previously available in Dutch.

They pick up where the di-

ary ends, depicting what happened to Anne and her family after their arrest. Eyewitness accounts provided some of the information.

The actress playing Anne speaks to the camera in between harrowing scenes of the arrest, transportation and the inhuman conditions and treatment of Jews in the camps first Camp Westerbork in the eastern Netherlands and later Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. Anne, 15, and her older sister, Margot, both died of typhus shortly before Bergen-Belsen was liberated.

The video's creators worked with the museum and Dutch public broadcaster NTR to develop the series.

"It makes a deep impres-

sion to look through Anne's eyes at the last months of her life; the terrible time in the camps," the Amsterdam museum's executive director, Ronald Leopold, said in a statement Wednesday.

"With this sequel, we've answered the questions of many young people about what happened to Anne after her arrest, the period she couldn't describe in her diary," he added. "We hope to reach even more young people worldwide with the English-language version of 'Anne Frank - After the Arrest.'"

The three episodes, each about 15 minutes long, will be available to view on the museum's YouTube channel from 9 p.m. (1900 GMT) on Thursday. □

NFL appeals 6-game suspension for Browns quarterback Watson

By **ROB MAADDI**

AP Pro Football Writer

The NFL is appealing a disciplinary officer's decision to suspend Cleveland Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson for six games for violating the league's personal conduct policy, giving Commissioner Roger Goodell or someone he designates authority to impose a stiffer penalty.

Former federal judge Sue L. Robinson issued her ruling Monday after Watson was accused by two dozen women in Texas of sexual misconduct during massage treatments while he played for the Houston Texans.

In her 16-page report, Robinson described Watson's behavior as "more egregious than any before reviewed by the NFL."

Robinson's punishment in her first case since being jointly appointed by the league and NFL Players Association fell well short of the indefinite suspension of at least one year sought by the league.

So, the NFL on Wednesday exercised its right to appeal, per the collective bargaining agreement.

The players' union has until the end of business Friday to respond in writing. The union could challenge the appeal ruling in federal court, setting the stage for a prolonged fight.

NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy said there's no timeline for Goodell or his designee to make a ruling.



Cleveland Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson prepares to throw a pass during the NFL football team's training camp, Monday, Aug. 1, 2022, in Berea, Ohio.

According to the league's personal conduct policy, the appeal will be processed on an expedited basis. Also, it will be "limited to consideration of the terms of discipline imposed" and "based upon a review of the existing record without reference to evidence or testimony not previously considered."

The policy also states the "decision of the Commissioner or his designee, which may overturn, reduce, modify or increase the discipline previously issued, will be final and binding on all parties."

This is the first time since the new CBA was signed in

2020 that the league and the NFLPA turned to a jointly appointed disciplinary officer to determine violations of the personal conduct policy. In the past, Goodell has served as judge and jury to impose penalties on players. By appealing, the NFL is giving that power back to Goodell, who can choose another person to levy any punishment.

A league official told The Associated Press before Watson's three-day disciplinary hearing concluded in June that the NFL wanted to avoid an appeal.

But the league proceeded with one amid a backlash from some fans and intense

public pressure in the media. Other factors include Watson's lack of remorse, which Robinson noted in her report.

The NFL argued for an unprecedented punishment and wanted to fine Watson at least \$5 million, a person familiar with the discussions told the AP on condition of anonymity because the hearing was private.

Watson, who played four seasons with the Texans before sitting out last season and then being traded to Cleveland in March, recently settled 23 of 24 lawsuits filed by the women who alleged sexual harassment or assault during mas-

sage treatments in 2020 and 2021. Two grand juries in Texas declined to indict Watson on criminal complaints brought by 10 of the women.

Robinson concluded that Watson violated three provisions of the personal conduct policy: sexual assault; conduct posing a genuine danger to the safety and well-being of another person; and conduct that undermines or puts at risk the integrity of the NFL.

She declined to suspend Watson for a full year based on precedents and the league's current policy. But Robinson concluded a longer suspension could be justified if it was already outlined in the personal conduct policy.

"While it may be entirely appropriate to more severely discipline players for non-violent sexual conduct, I do not believe it is appropriate to do so without notice of the extraordinary change this position portends for the NFL and its players," Robinson wrote in her report. Watson has continued to practice with the Browns while awaiting resolution to his case, which has raised questions about the league's handling of off-field player behavior, inconsistencies in its personal conduct policy and its overall support of women. The Browns have been in a state of limbo as well, not knowing when or if Watson will be able to play this season. □

Associated Press

Mickelson, others sue PGA Tour over LIV Golf suspensions



Phil Mickelson lines up a shot on the 18th hole during the first round of the Bedminster Invitational LIV Golf tournament in Bedminster, N.J., Friday, July 29, 2022.

By **DOUG FERGUSON**

AP Golf Writer

Phil Mickelson, Bryson DeChambeau and a group of players who defected to Saudi-funded LIV Golf filed an antitrust lawsuit Wednesday against the PGA Tour, the first step in a legal fight that could define the rules of where players can compete.

The Wall Street Journal first reported the filing in U.S. District Court in San Francisco. The complaint also includes an application for a temporary restraining order

by Talor Gooch, Hudson Swafford and Matt Jones to compete in the FedEx Cup playoffs.

Six players who have competed in LIV Golf events are among the top 125 in the FedEx Cup standings and would be eligible for the start of the PGA Tour's postseason that starts next week.

The PGA Tour has suspended members for playing in LIV Golf events without a release to play in tournaments the same week of a PGA Tour event. The tour

does not allow releases for tournaments held in North America. The last two LIV Golf events with \$25 million in prize money for 54 holes with no cut were in Oregon and New Jersey.

The Journal reported that details of the lawsuit indicate the PGA Tour suspended Mickelson in March for allegedly recruiting players to LIV Golf. When he applied for reinstatement in June, the tour denied it because he had played in the first Saudi event held outside London. □

Associated Press

Castellanos HR after overturned call, Phils beat Braves 3-1

By **PAUL NEWBERRY**

AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Talk about taking advantage of an overturned call.

Nick Castellanos hit a tie-breaking two-run homer in the eighth after an inning-ending double play was reversed, sending the Philadelphia Phillies to a 3-1 victory over the Atlanta Braves on Wednesday.

"That's an example that all the little things are just as important as the big things," Castellanos said.

After getting blown out 13-1 in the opener of the two-game series between NL East rivals, the Phillies looked to be down to their final three outs when J.T. Realmuto grounded into what was ruled a double play with the Braves nursing a 1-0 lead.

But Philadelphia challenged the call, and the replay showed Realmuto — hustling all the way down the line — getting a foot to the bag just ahead of the relay throw while Rhys Hoskins trotted home from third.

With the game now tied at 1, Collin McHugh (2-2) fell behind 2-0 in the count before grooving one to Castellanos, who launched a 420-foot drive over the center-field wall for his ninth homer of the season.

"J.T. running down the line like that gave me an opportunity to get a hit like that," Castellanos said.

Zack Wheeler (10-5) claimed the win over his hometown team with five-hit ball over seven innings, snapping Atlanta's four-game winning streak. His only big mistake came in the fifth, when he served up a homer to Orlando Arcia.

"It was one of those games where you just keep grinding away and hope the hitters come around," Wheeler said. "I have faith in those guys."

Phillies newcomer David Robertson, acquired in a series of deals ahead of the trade deadline, worked a scoreless ninth for his first Philadelphia save after locking down 14 wins for the Chicago Cubs.



Philadelphia Phillies players, from left, Darick Hall and J.T. Realmuto greet Nick Castellanos on his three-run home run in the eighth inning of a baseball game against the Atlanta Braves, Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

The Braves wasted 6 2/3 scoreless innings by Charlie Morton, who turned in another strong performance by Atlanta's rotation.

"We're going against a tough guy over on their side," Morton said. "Zack threw the ball really well. Going into a game like

that, you need to limit them as much as possible."

Over the last five games, the Braves starters have surrendered just 16 hits and three runs in 33 innings, with seven walks and 40 strikeouts.

But the bullpen let this one get away.

Still, the Braves are leading the NL wild-card race and have their sights set higher as they hit the road for a rare five-game series against the first-place Mets. New York came into the day 2 1/2 games ahead of the World Series champion Braves, who have won four straight NL East titles.

The Phillies are also in the playoff mix. Before the win, they were tied with St. Louis for the final wild card.

ROBERTSON'S ROLE

While Robertson got the save in his first appearance since the trade, manager Rob Thomson stressed that he's not the full-time closer. The Phillies have used a committee approach since Corey Knebel was stripped of the job in mid-June.

That will continue, according to Thomson.

"Robby closed the game, but he's not labeled the closer," the manager said. "Everyone will get a feel for pitching in different innings, which is good because you're not going to have everyone available every night."

Robertson said he's fine with the arrangement.

"It is a little different" than his role with the Cubs, he said.

"I'll just have to adjust like I've done over the years." □

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